

CHEERED BALFOUR.

British Premier Able to Resume His Place in Parliament.

AND DENIES REPORTS OF BRITAIN'S

Intended Seizure of Spanish Ports.

(Special to the Daily Herald.)

London, Feb. 25.—Premier Balfour on his first appearance today in the House of Commons since his illness, was greeted with warm cheers.

Replying to a question, he confirmed the statement made in these despatches Feb. 20, that there was no truth in the reports that Great Britain intended to seize certain points on the Spanish coast in the event of a continental war.

He said: "I am glad to say that relations between this country and Spain are likely to remain of the most friendly character."

The Premier added that there appeared to be no truth in the rumor that Spain was mobilizing her forces although she was strengthening some of her garrisons.

Replying to a question in the House of Commons today, the foreign under secretary, Earl Percy said the government was not aware of any negotiations between Germany and Russia whereby as announced in some newspapers, in return for Germany according Russia certain advantages during the war, Russia would support Germany in regard to the Bagdad railroad question, and a general extension of German predominance in Asia Minor.

MURDER AND SUICIDE.

Awful Crime of a Drunken Maine Man.

(Special to Daily Herald.)

Portland, Me., Feb. 25.—Charles F. B. Laubrick shot his wife Mary, probably fatally, and then killed himself at their home at East Deering, last night. The weapon used was a 32 calibre revolver. The woman's condition is critical.

Laubrick was about 40 years of age and his wife was five years his senior. They were married a year ago. The police believe that the shooting followed a quarrel and that Laubrick was under the influence of liquor at the time.

STEAMER OVERDUE.

(Special to the Daily Herald.)

Sydney, N. S., Feb. 25.—The steamer Glencoe of the Reid Newfoundland Co's service, is now three days overdue at Louisburg from Placentia. She is probably detained by heavy ice floes which are blocking the whole of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and no fears are entertained for her safety.

Over a hundred bags of western mail for Newfoundland are accumulated here awaiting her arrival.

DISASTROUS FIRE.

(Special to the Daily Herald.)

Conneaut Harbor, Ohio, Feb. 25.—Fire today practically wiped out the business portion of Conneaut Harbor. Among the buildings burned were the Mutual block and the Marine bank building, with their contents, including the Marine Bank the post office and several stores. Loss is estimated at \$100,000, partly covered by insurance.

MICHIGAN FLOATED.

(Special to Daily Herald.)

London, Feb. 25.—The British steamer Lake Michigan has been floated and towed to this place.

THE AFFAIR AT PORT ARTHUR.

Not So Serious for Japan as Reported.

St. Petersburg, Feb. 25, 2 45 a. m.—A

telegram from Viceroy Alexieff to the Czar says:

"At a quarter before 3 on the morning of February 23 numerous Japanese torpedo boats attempted to attack the battleship Retvizan and sink large steamers loaded with inflammables. The Retvizan was the first to observe the torpedo boats and opened fire on them. She was supported by the land batteries. She destroyed two steamers near the entrance of the harbor; they were coming directly towards her. One of them went on the rocks near the lighthouse on Tiger Peninsula and the other sank under Golden Hill. The Retvizan observed four steamers in a sinking condition and eight torpedo boats departing slowly to rejoin the waiting Japanese warships. A portion of the crews of the Japanese vessels were drowned. The grounded steamer is still burning. The enemy is observed in the offing of Port Arthur in two lines."

When the Japanese crew saved themselves in boats, and it is possible that some of them were picked up by the enemy's torpedo boats.

I am proceeding to examine the coasts. The entrance of the harbor is open. I attribute the complete derangement of the enemy's plan to the brilliant action and destructive fire of the Retvizan. Floating mines are still visible in the roadstead. I have recalled the three cruisers sent in pursuit of the enemy, in order, in the first place, to clear the roadstead of floating mines. We had no losses.

Stories are Conflicting.

St. Petersburg, Feb. 24.—In the absence of an official announcement, which is momentarily expected, the stories of the dimensions of this alleged victory are most conflicting and confusing in character.

The most circumstantial report was that the Japanese had attempted to bottle up the Russian fleet at Port Arthur by sinking two stone-laden vessels at the entrance of the harbor, employing the tactics which were considered, but not executed by the late Admiral Sampson, U. S. navy, with the Merrimac at Santiago during the Spanish-American war.

According to this account two Japanese ships appeared off the harbor with a Japanese fleet behind them and ostensibly in pursuit. The Russians, however, suspected the ruse and their ships steamed out, sank the stone laden vessels, engaged and defeated the enemy and drove them off. The reports of the loss inflicted, however, are conflicting.

All the stories include the feature of the vessels loaded with stones, but according to some versions, the Japanese fleet was conveying transports with the purpose of effecting a landing at Pigeon Bay and after the failure of this preliminary manoeuvre, the Russians played havoc with both the Japanese warships and the transports, sinking four of the former and two of the latter. One account gives the name of the battleship Retvizan as the vessel which particularly distinguished herself during the action by ramming and sinking one of the Japanese battleships.

It must be observed that in this despatch Viceroy Alexieff does not mention the number of steamers the Japanese tried to sink or drive upon the Russian ships, and it is not yet known whether the four vessels the captain of the Retvizan observed going down, in addition to the two destroyed, were also laden with inflammables, or whether they were warships.

The Daring Japs.

London, Feb. 25.—It is now clear that Admiral Togo made a daring attempt to bottle up the Russian fleet at Port Arthur and although Viceroy Alexieff asserts that the entrance to the harbor of Port Arthur is still free, the fact that Admiral Togo's fleet minus the vessels injured in the courageous exploit, was seen steaming at full speed on a southeast course for Wei-Hai-Wei, is interpreted as an indication of the Japanese admiral's satisfaction with the accomplishment of his design.

It is pointed out here that it would be difficult for the Russians, in the darkness of the night, to ascertain just what had happened to the Japanese vessels or to distinguish between hulks it was their intention to sink, and torpedo boats. As two injured vessels were observed steaming slowly away from Port Arthur, and as the Japanese fleet was going at full speed off Wei Hai Wei, it is presumed that the two injured vessels might have gone elsewhere to repair.

Another explanation of the incompleteness of Admiral Togo's squadron as seen off Wei Hai Wei is that he possibly left some vessels at watch off Port Arthur.

Further details of this engagement from independent sources are awaited with the greatest interest, but it is believed that the reports that Japanese battleships or transports were sunk should be taken with a degree of allowance.

Major McDougall, of Moncton, an officer of the 8th Hussars, is spending a few days in the city.

FRANCE AND BRITAIN

Talking Over Their Disputes in a Friendly Way.

EVIDENCES THAT ALL CAUSES OF POSSIBLE FRICTION

Are About to be Removed.

(Special to Daily Herald.)

London, Feb. 25.—Premier Balfour has sufficiently recovered his health to come to this city to preside at a cabinet meeting.

Prior to the meeting the French ambassador, M. Cambon, called at the foreign office and had an hour's talk with Foreign Secretary Lansdowne.

The ambassador returned here from Paris last night, and apart from the expressing of views in regard to the most recent development of the war, on which subject the two cabinets are keeping in the closest touch with each other, there is good reason to believe that a settlement of all matters in dispute between France and Great Britain is on the eve of being arranged.

Such questions as Egypt, Morocco, Newfoundland, etc., have been fully discussed by the two governments for some months, and the differences are being gradually eliminated until practically nothing remains to prevent an early signature of a treaty removing all outstanding obstacles to a complete accord between the two powers.

The Signalling Corps.

Ottawa, Feb. 25.—Officers of the new signalling corps are gazetted as follows: Major Capt. Bruce Carruthers, from unattached list; acting adjutant, Captain F. A. Lister, Royal Canadian regiment (late of Fredericton). Major Carruthers will be inspector of signalling in all Ontario military districts and west to the Pacific coast. Captain Lister will be inspector of Quebec and the maritime province district.

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Middlemore Home.

Persons wishing to apply for children from the Middlemore Home will please send to undersigned for application forms. In writing state whether a boy or girl is required, and give if possible one or more town references. The committee desire to have all applications in on or before the middle of April. The children will probably arrive early in June.

J. W. SPURDEN,
Sec'y to Committee.

Feb. 22—d3w21

NOTICE.

Tenders marked "Tenders for Wood"

Will be received at the Department of Public Works, Fredericton, N. B., until Tuesday, the 1st day of March next, at noon, for twenty cords of good merchantable dry hardwood, in two or four feet lengths.

C. H. LABILLOIS,
Chief Commissioner.

Dept. Public Works,
Fredericton, N. B., Feb. 16th, 1904
Feb. 17—d51w21

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